

THE

# Christian History ;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival  
of Religion in *England Scotland and America.*

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Saturday SEPTEMBER 24. 1743. § N<sup>o</sup>. 30.  
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*The Remainder of the Extra<sup>d</sup> from Mr. Baxter's Ser-  
mon on Making light of Christ and Salvation, &c.*

‘ **O**H that *Heaven and Hell* should work no more on  
‘ Men ! Oh that *Everlastingness* should work no  
‘ more ! O how can you forbear when you are  
‘ alone to think with your selves what it is to be *everlastingly*  
‘ in *Joy* or in *Torment* ! I wonder that such Thoughts *do not*  
‘ break your *Sleep* ; and that they come not in your Mind when  
‘ you are about your Labour ! I wonder how you can *almost*  
‘ do any thing else : How you can have any *Quietness* in your  
‘ Minds ; How you can eat or drink, or rest till you have got  
‘ some Ground of everlasting Consolations ! Is that a *Man* or  
‘ a *Carpe* that is not affected with Matters of this Moment ?  
‘ That can be *readier to sleep*, than to tremble, when he hear-  
‘ eth how he must stand at the Bar of God ? Is that a *Man*,  
‘ or a *Clod of Clay*, that can rise and lie down without being  
‘ deeply affected with his *everlasting Estate* ? That can fol-  
‘ low his worldly Business, and make nothing of the great  
‘ Business of *Salvation* or *Domination* ; and that, when they  
‘ know it is hard at Hand ? Truly Sirs, when I think of the  
‘ Weight of the Matter, I wonder at the very *best* of *GOD's*  
‘ *Saints* upon Earth, that they are no better, and do no more  
‘ in so weighty a Cause. I wonder at those whom the *World*  
‘ accounteth more holy than needs, and scorns for making too  
‘ much *Ado* ; that they can put off Christ and their Souls  
‘ with so little : That they pour not out their Souls in every  
‘ Supplication ; That they are not more taken up with God ;  
‘ that their Thoughts be not more serious in Preparation for  
‘ their Account. I wonder that they be not an hundred

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' Times more strict in their Lives ; and more laborious and  
 ' unwearied in striving for the Crown than they are. And  
 ' for my self, as I am *ashamed* of my dull and careless Heart,  
 ' and of my slow and unprofitable Course of Life ; so, the  
 ' Lord knows, I am *ashamed of every Sermon I preach* : when  
 ' I think *what* I have been speaking of, and *who* sent me ;  
 ' and that Men's Salvation or Damnation is so much con-  
 ' cern'd in it. I am ready to tremble, lest God should judge  
 ' me as a Slighter of his Truths and the Souls of Men, and  
 ' lest in the best Sermon I should be guilty of their Blood.  
 ' Methinks we should not speak a Word to Men in Matters  
 ' of such Consequence, *without Tears*, or the *greatest Earnest-*  
 ' *ness that possibly we can* : Were not we too much guilty of the  
 ' Sin which we reprove, it would be so. Whether we are alone,  
 ' or in Company, methinks our End, and such an End, should  
 ' still be in our Mind, and as before our Eyes, and we should  
 ' sooner forget any Thing, and set light by any Thing, or by  
 ' all Things, than by this !

We know not how to close this Article of Outcries with  
 more Propriety than in the Words of the Rev. Dr. SEWALL  
 in his Sermon on a Day of Prayer, to seek to GOD for the more  
 plentiful Effusion of his HOLY SPIRIT, Feb. 26. 1741, 2.

' As for the Out-cries, Tremblings, and Faintings which have  
 ' been experienced in some Places, I apprehend the Cause must  
 ' be judged of by the Effect. We may not limit THE HOLY  
 ' ONE. The *Sailor came trembling, and fell down before Paul*  
 ' *and Silas.*---They who heard Peter's Sermon were pricked in  
 ' their Heart, and said to Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles,  
 ' Men and Brethren, what shall we do ? Acts 2. 37. A wounded  
 ' Spirit who can bear ? If such Persons therefore have an holy  
 ' Awe of God, a deep Humiliation under the Sense of Sin,  
 ' and earnest Concern about Deliverance from it ; here is the  
 ' Finger of God. And if it shall please God to impress such  
 ' a Sense of Sin, and of his Wrath on Men, that they are  
 ' forced to cry out under it ; they are to be pitied, and proper  
 ' Means used for their Relief ; and not to be censured as mad  
 ' and out-rageous. But then, if any would indulge themselves  
 ' in these Out-cries, especially in Time of publick Worship,  
 ' when there is no real Necessity for it, and they might restrain  
 ' themselves ; I think they are disorderly, and do that which  
 ' has a Tendency to disturb the quiet attentive hearing of  
 ' God's Word. Nor may we make a Judgment of a Work  
 ' whether

whether genuine or no, *merely* by such extraordinary Com-  
 motions. For there have been Tremblings which have not  
 proceeded from the Spirit of Truth and Holiness. Let us  
 not then presume to confine the *free SPIRIT* of GOD, but  
 regard the *Substance* of the Work itself. I make no Doubt  
 but that in our Congregations many have been deeply wound-  
 ed for Sin without these Out-cries, and that the Convictions  
 have in considerable Numbers issued in a saving Conversion  
 to God. Nor can I suppose that it is the Duty of Ministers  
 to try to excite these Screaming; but rather to set the *Ter-  
 rors* of the *Law* and *gracious Invitations* of the *Gospel* before  
 Men *in the most powerful Manner* they are able; and then  
 leave it to the only wise God to take his own Way, who  
 can if he pleaseth order these Things to the awakening of  
 others; as we are inform'd has been the Case in some other  
 Places. *Let not such* then as *have not felt* this Degree of  
 Terror, *judge them that have*; and *let not such* as *have been*  
 thus wrought upon, *judge them that have not*: But let both  
 prove their own Work, and examine by the Word of God  
 whether the *Fruits* of the *SPIRIT* are found in them; such  
 as Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus  
 Christ; Love to God, and our Neighbour, Meekness, Hu-  
 mility, and the like. If upon an impartial Trial you find  
 these Things in you, you will have rejoicing in yourselves,  
 and not in another. And let not any who *have been made*  
*sensible of their perishing Condition*, and *then enabled to sub-*  
*mit to Christ* as their only Saviour, deny the Work of Grace  
 God has wrought in them because they have *not felt such a*  
*Degree* of Terror, and *then such rapturous Joys* as others  
 may have experienced. But rather be encouraged to wait  
 upon God in the Way of Duty for the Assurance and Joy  
 of Faith. And let not your Eye be evil, because God is  
 good. May not God do what he will with his own? Do  
 not then behave as the *elder Son* in the *Parable*, who was  
 angry upon the Account of the Joy expressed in his Father's  
 House, when his prodigal Brother return'd a true Penitent.  
*There is Joy in Heaven over the Sinner that repenteth*; and  
 there must be just Occasion for Joy upon *Earth*, when the  
 Dead are thus made alive, and the Lost are found.

*An Account of the late Revival of Religion in both the Precincts of WRENTHAM, in the County of Suffolk in the Massachusetts-Province, about twenty-eight Miles to the Southward of Boston; as sent to us and subscribed by the Rev. Mr. MESSINGER Pastor of the Church in the Eastern Precinct, and the Rev. Mr. HAVEN Pastor of the Church in the Western.*

‘OUR blessed LORD’s Observations in *Mat. 5. 14, 15.*  
 ‘are indeed verified with Respect to *many Places* in  
 ‘*this Land* and *elsewhere* in late Months and Years; *A City*  
 ‘*that is set on a Hill cannot be hid. Neither do Men light a*  
 ‘*Candle and put it under a Bushel; but on a Candlestick, and it*  
 ‘*giveth Light unto all that are in the House.* A Man must be  
 ‘a very Stranger in *our Israel*, who doth not know, that Al-  
 ‘mighty GOD hath done such Wonders of Grace in *many*  
 ‘of *our Towns and Churches*, the Fame whereof has been  
 ‘spread far in the Country and the World: And the News  
 ‘whereof hath been very refreshing to many pious Souls, at  
 ‘a Distance.

‘The Places on which GOD has remarkably and plenti-  
 ‘fully rained down Righteousness, are as Cities set on Hills.  
 ‘And where the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS hath shined  
 ‘with more than ordinary Clearness and Power, and hath  
 ‘caused His SPIRIT to rest on *many* as an Enlightener,  
 ‘Sanctifier, Guide and Comforter; we should surely be un-  
 ‘willing, as we are unable to conceal such glorious Things  
 ‘from the Churches abroad, and from the World. Nay, on  
 ‘the other Hand, we cannot but think it the *Duty* of those  
 ‘who are so highly favoured of the LORD, *to publish the Good-*  
 ‘*ness of the LORD with the Voice of Thanksgiving, and tell of*  
 ‘*his wondrous Works*; by which he is doing Honour, especi-  
 ‘ally to his own Name, to his SON, and to his SPIRIT;  
 ‘and greatly promoting the Kingdom of CHRIST in the  
 ‘Souls of Men. And since the GOD of all Grace hath shewn  
 ‘much of the Power of his Grace in *our Parishes*, which nei-  
 ‘ther can, nor ought to be concealed; we think it *our Duty*  
 ‘to give the Publick an Account thereof with as much Dis-  
 ‘tinctness and Brevity as we can, for the Glory of his  
 ‘Name, Encouragement of his People, and Promotion of  
 ‘his Cause.

‘ It is now about *fifty* Years since the *first Church* of  
 ‘ CHRIST was gathered \* in the Town of *Wrentham*; and  
 ‘ since the Rev. Mr. SAMUEL MAN was ordained Pastor  
 ‘ thereof; whose Name is still precious to many here: who  
 ‘ laboured in this Part of CHRIST’s Vineyard till *March*  
 ‘ 1719, and died the 22d of *May* following, and left a very  
 ‘ mournful Family and People, bereaved of their worthy and  
 ‘ highly esteemed Shepherd. But the Goodness of the great  
 ‘ Shepherd was very remarkable in the Steps of his holy and  
 ‘ wise Providence in keeping the Sheep from scattering, and  
 ‘ in speedily uniting them in the Choice of the *senior Subscriber*  
 ‘ to this Account, to be their second Pastor: whom GOD  
 ‘ in his holy Providence, and without the Design of either  
 ‘ Mr. *Messinger* or the *People*, sent to preach with them on  
 ‘ the *next Lord’s Day* after the Death of their former Pastor.  
 ‘ And it afterwards appeared that then the Hearts of many of  
 ‘ the People were knit to him in such Love, as hath not yet  
 ‘ been broken; and proved a kind Providence to promote  
 ‘ his speedy Settlement among them, viz. on the 9th of  
 ‘ *December* 1719.

‘ The Town has mostly from its Infancy been greatly  
 ‘ smiled upon by Divine Providence, and is greatly increased:  
 ‘ so that on the 23d of *December* 1737, the General Court  
 ‘ was pleased to divide it into *two Parishes*; and on the 16th  
 ‘ of *February* 1737-8, a *second Church* of CHRIST was ga-  
 ‘ thered in the Town, consisting of *twenty four Males*, mostly  
 ‘ dismissed from the said *first Church*, and soon after *twenty four*  
 ‘ *Women* were dismissed from the *first* to the *second Church*.

‘ On the *eighth* of *November* the *junior Subscriber* to this  
 ‘ Account was *ordained Pastor* of the said *second Church* in this  
 ‘ Town: And an happy Correspondence has hitherto conti-  
 ‘ nued, blessed be GOD, between the two Parishes, Churches  
 ‘ and Pastors. And this is the more properly taken Notice  
 ‘ of in this Place, as it gives us very frequent Opportunities  
 ‘ to change Pulpits on *Sabbaths* and *Lectures*; to attend on  
 ‘ each other’s Lectures, publick and private, without Preju-  
 ‘ dice; to converse with Persons of each other’s Charge,  
 ‘ who are under spiritual Difficulties, and with one another  
 ‘ relating to any difficult and perplexed Cases, that come un-  
 ‘ der either of our Observation: (A Priviledge which we  
 ‘ pray may be commensurate with the Life of us both.) All  
 ‘ which

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\* *April* 13. 1692.

' which gives us vast Opportunity to be acquainted with the  
 ' State of Religion through the Town, and enables us to sign  
 ' our Names in conjunct Testimony for the *Work of Divine*  
 ' *Grace* that is happily carrying on among us.

' The People in this Town (so far as we can learn, or  
 ' have had Opportunity to observe) have generally been ex-  
 ' ternally sober and honest ; have kept up a great deal of ex-  
 ' ternal Religion, especially in their Families, and the House  
 ' of God ; so that the Generations that have risen up from  
 ' Time to Time, have generally been instructed, from their  
 ' very early Youth, in the first Principles of our holy Reli-  
 ' gion. But, alas ! for a long Time past, the *Power of God-*  
 ' *liness* has been evident but in comparatively few Instances ;  
 ' 'till the blessed Revival of Religion the Almighty GOD has  
 ' lately favoured us with. And just before the Descent of  
 ' these late remarkable Showers of Divine Influence, *Religion*  
 ' was plainly in a *languishing Condition* : even some *Externals*  
 ' of it began to be more and more neglected ; insomuch that  
 ' in the Year 1739 there were but *two* in the *whole Town* ad-  
 ' mitted to the *Lord's Table* : and Vices of various Sorts were  
 ' much more prevalent than before. And tho' we have Rea-  
 ' son to think that some among us did sigh and cry for the  
 ' Abominations that were among us, and for the Spirit of  
 ' Formality in, and Indifferency about Religion, which were  
 ' very evident among us ; yet we had awful Reason to  
 ' think that the *wise Virgins* slumber'd and slept too too much  
 ' with the *foolish* ; and that the *Godly* were by far too much  
 ' conformed to this present evil World. And *as for us*, our  
 ' Hearts were ready to sink to see *Religion dying*, and were  
 ' ready to mourn in the Prophet's Language, *Isa. 49. 4. I*  
 ' *have laboured in vain, I have spent my Strength for nought, and*  
 ' *in vain.* --- But behold in the midst of Darkness, Light  
 ' arose ! and the great GOD was pleased to glorify the  
 ' Riches of his boundless Grace, and visit the Souls of *many*  
 ' of his People with the powerful Influences of his own  
 ' SPIRIT : And many that were going their own sinful  
 ' Ways, we trust, he hath turned about, and set their Faces  
 ' toward *Zion*. Blessed be GOD, for his preventing Good-  
 ' ness ! *When the LORD turned again the Captivity of Zion,*  
 ' *we were like them that dream.* --- *The LORD hath done great*  
 ' *Things for us : whereof we are glad. Praise ye the LORD !*  
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The first open and publick Manifestation of the LORD's  
 Return to us by the Power of his Grace, was on the 26th  
 of *February 1740, 1*. It was the *Day* appointed by the *Govern-  
 ment* to be kept with solemn *Fasting & Prayer* through-  
 out this *Province* to implore the Blessing of Heaven on our  
 Nation in the War with *Spain*, &c. and the Day in Course  
 for the publick Lecture preparatory for the Administration  
 of the LORD's Supper in the *second Church* in this Town;  
 where on this double Occasion the Minister preached from  
*Zech. 12. 10*. There appeared, especially in the *Afternoon*,  
 a very uncommon *Attentiveness* upon the Word, a wonderful  
 Tenderness upon the Assembly: The Tokens of a very  
 serious Concern were visible on many Faces. And tho'  
 there is sufficient Reason to believe that many Persons, *be-  
 fore* this, were under considerable *Convictions*, and abode so  
 after the Day abovesaid; yet they kept their Concern very  
 much to themselves, until some Time in *March* following,  
 when they could no longer conceal their Distresses; they  
 began to lament their own Cases to one another, and to  
 come frequently to their Minister under Soul-Trouble. It  
 was very agreeably surprizing almost daily to hear of new *In-  
 stances* of young Persons (for the Work of GOD's SPIRIT  
 seemed to be chiefly on young People) in great Concern, what  
 they should do to be saved. The same *Thoughtfulness* seem'd  
 to run from *House to House*, and from *Soul to Soul*; and  
 their Complaints against themselves were very much the  
 same.

It was but a little while after this before the same SPI-  
 RIT's Operations of the same Kind were equally remarka-  
 ble in the *first Parish* and *Congregation* in the Town. Par-  
 ticularly on the *Annual Fast April 23. 1741*, was a very  
 open and publick Display of Divine Grace there, very much  
 as mentioned above (in the *other Congregation*) when the  
 Minister preached from *Jer. 26. 13*; and many were bro't  
 under *strong Convictions*, and thenceforward many flocked  
 to their Minister, especially young People, under Soul-  
 Distress.

The powerful Awakenings & Convictions on Persons Minds  
 spread from Neighbourhood to Neighbourhood, so that by *Mid-  
 Summer* there were Instances in all Parts of the Town under  
 great Concern to know what they should do to be saved. Yea,  
 it appeared to us, so far as we could observe in our respective  
 Parishes,

' Parishes, that *very few Houses, if any* in the Town were passed  
 ' by and left without some observable spiritual Concern on  
 ' some or other of the Family. Our People, in general, be-  
 ' came much more attentive in Time of publick Worship ;  
 ' their Countenances being generally solemn, listening and  
 ' tender, shew'd their extraordinary Appetite for the Word :  
 ' and it became a very *common* Thing with us to have a *great*  
 ' *Part of the Assembly in Tears* at hearing the Word, and espe-  
 ' cially when they heard the glad Tidings of the *Gospel*, and  
 ' they were invited to rest their weary Souls in CHRIST the  
 ' Saviour. While we endeavoured with great Plainness to  
 ' show unto Sinners their Guilt and Danger, and to open the  
 ' awful Contents of the *Law* to them, these Truths would  
 ' often have their proper Effect, in alarming guilty Consci-  
 ' ences, and filling the Minds of many with great Concern  
 ' for their own Souls ; and then the *Gospel-News* of a SA-  
 ' VIOUR, and the Freeness of Divine Grace would *marvel-*  
 ' *lously melt* a great Part of our Congregations into Tears, and  
 ' perswade them, by divine Help, to seek the *great Salvation*.  
 ' Nor have we seen Reason as yet to think any other than that  
 ' *many* of these *earnest Seekers* were *sure Finders* of the *Pearl*  
 ' *of great Price*.

\* Our People grew very desirous of *Lectures* ; that they  
 ' might have more frequent Opportunities for spiritual In-  
 ' struction, and to join in social Worship ; where we found  
 ' GOD often bestowed his Blessing. It was not rare to hear  
 ' them confess that they used to be weary of the *Sabbath* ;  
 ' but now they long to have it return, and that it seemed ex-  
 ' ceeding long to them, if they went from *Sabbath* to *Sabbath*  
 ' without hearing a Sermon. We used frequently to gratify  
 ' their Desires, and preach *publick* or *private Lectures* : tho'  
 ' we have since seen Cause to lament that we did not preach  
 ' *much oftener* at the Beginning of this very remarkable Day  
 ' of Grace, than we did ; when the SPIRIT was most evi-  
 ' dently with the *Word*, and the Work of the LORD, thro'  
 ' infinitely wonderful Grace, did prosper in our Hands. We  
 ' have since, upon more Observation and Experience, been  
 ' *more frequent* in our Preaching, and see no Reason to repent  
 ' it, but to bless GOD for strengthening us unto and succeed-  
 ' ing us, as we believe he hath, in our more abundant La-  
 ' bours.

( To be continued. )